

ITEM: 19

SUBJECT: Status of the Long-Term Program and Stakeholder Advisory Workgroup Recommendations

BOARD ACTION: *No Board action. Information Item Only.*

BACKGROUND: In Fall 2008, Central Valley Water Board staff convened the long-term Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) Stakeholder Advisory Workgroup. The workgroup is composed of over 50 participants representing federal, State, and local government agencies; agricultural, environmental and environmental justice groups. Per the charter established by the workgroup, workgroup members were those who provided the Executive Officer with a letter expressing interest and formal commitment to participate in the workgroup. The purpose of the workgroup is to advise and provide comment to Water Board staff on the development of long-term program alternatives and evaluation measures.

Since Fall 2008, the workgroup and staff have worked together to develop long-term program alternatives and overall program goals and objectives –(see Attachment A). There are four alternatives in addition to the “no change” alternative. One important difference between the current ILRP and the proposed alternatives is all five alternatives describe how discharges to ground water, in addition to discharges to surface water, would be addressed.

The final workgroup meeting was held in August 2009. At this meeting, the workgroup came to consensus that the proposed alternatives should be evaluated in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The workgroup also came to consensus on the proposed goals and objectives (except for Goal 4 and Objective 1). Staff had proposed Objective 4 and dropped it based on workgroup feedback. Staff will be updating the 2nd Draft ILRP Alternatives document (Attachment A) based on workgroup comments.

Unlike the typical EIR process, where a recommended alternative is identified prior to conducting the analysis, each of the five alternatives will undergo the same level of analysis. An economic analysis and staff policy analysis will also be conducted during the draft EIR process. The Central Valley Water Board’s contractor, ICF Jones and Stokes, will be developing the draft EIR and economics analysis. The results of the draft EIR, economics, and policy analyses will be used to identify a staff recommendation from the proposed range of alternatives. Staff have committed to continue to engage stakeholders throughout the draft EIR process. The draft EIR and staff recommended alternative will be circulated for public review and comment in late Spring/ early Summer 2010.

RECOMMENDATION: No recommendation, information item only.

Mgmt. Review_____

Legal Review_____EGW_____

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11020 Sun Center Dr. #200

Rancho Cordova, CA 95670